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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9788
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2392
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5887
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9450
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7077
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 2405
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2821
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000059

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MLS, DRL, AND IO
PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/28/2020
TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM BM
SUBJECT: BURMA: REPORTER SENTENCED TO 13 YEARS

Classified By: Political Officer Marc Shaw for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

¶11. (C) Opposition lawyer Aung Thein verified a January 28 press report stating that the Rangoon Western District Court sentenced reporter Ngwe Soe Lin to a total of 13 years imprisonment for violating the Electronics Transactions Act and the Immigration Emergency Provisions Act. Although press reports link Ngwe Soe Lin to the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) -- a Norway-based pro-democracy, non-profit media organization -- Aung Thein told us Ngwe Soe Lin is not officially a DVB reporter; rather, he is a stringer who sent DVB a video of those orphaned after Cyclone Nargis in 2008.

¶12. (C) According to the press, Special Branch police arrested Ngwe Soe Lin in June 2009 at an internet cafe and reportedly seized a video camera at his home. Ngwe Soe Lin's brother, Aung Tun Myint (aka Aung Aung) is also in jail; he was arrested for photographing a voting booth in Rangoon during the May 2008 constitutional referendum. Aung Thein told us Aung Tun Myint has been serving a three-year term since July in Sittwe prison, Rakhine State.

DINGER